

**T H A M E S      V A L L E Y**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL**

**S E R V I C E S**

**Harvest Hill Cottages, Harvest Hill Road,  
Maidenhead, Berkshire**

**Archaeological Evaluation**

**by Joanna Pine**

**Site Code: HHM10/120**

**(SU 8938 7935)**

**Harvest Hill Cottages, Harvest Hill Road,  
Maidenhead, Berkshire**

**An Archaeological Evaluation**

**for Mr K. S. Hans**

by Jo Pine

Thames Valley Archaeological Services

Ltd

Site Code HHM10/120

**November 2010**

## Summary

**Site name:** Harvest Hill Cottages, Harvest Hill Road, Maidenhead, Berkshire

**Grid reference:** SU 8938 7935

**Site activity:** Archaeological Evaluation

**Date and duration of project:** 15th–16th November 2010

**Project manager:** Steve Ford

**Site supervisor:** Jo Pine

**Site code:** HHM 10/120

**Area of site:** c. 1100 sq m

**Summary of results:** Modern features were recorded together with a modern buried soil. A single prehistoric struck flint was recorded. The site does not appear to have any archaeological potential.

**Location and reference of archive:** The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at Reading Museum in due course.

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Report edited/checked by:	Steve Ford ✓ 30.11.10
	Steve Preston ✓ 30.11.10

# Harvest Hill Cottages, Harvest Hill Road, Maidenhead An Archaeological Evaluation

by Jo Pine

**Report 10/120**

## **Introduction**

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out at Harvest Hill Cottages, Harvest Hill Road, Maidenhead, Berkshire (SU 8938 7935). (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr K. S. Hans, 66 Braywick Road, Maidenhead, Berkshire, SL6 1DE. A planning consent has been granted (09/001084) by the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead for the construction of two new houses with garages following demolition of the existing structures on the site. The consent is subject to a condition relating to archaeology, requiring the provision of a programme of archaeological work in advance of development.

This is in accordance with the Department of the Environment's Planning Policy Guidance, *Archaeology and Planning* (PPG16 1990), which has since been superseded by PPS5, *Planning for the Historic Environment*, and with the Royal Borough's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Ms Fiona Macdonald, Principal Archaeologist for Berkshire Archaeology, archaeological adviser to the Royal Borough. The fieldwork was undertaken by Jo Pine between 15th–16th November 2010 and the site code is HHM10/120. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at Reading Museum in due course.

## **Location, topography and geology**

The site lies to the south of Maidenhead and to the west of Bray, in Berkshire (SU 8938 7932) (Fig. 1). It comprises an L-shaped parcel of land of *c.* 1100 sq m on the north side of Harvest Hill Road, at its junction with Windsor Road. The site was previously occupied by buildings and associated gardens (Fig. 2). The site is mapped as being on the boundary of three geologies; Upper Chalk, Reading Beds and the Boyn Hill Gravels (BGS 1978). Sand was observed within the trenches during the evaluation. The site lies at *c.*28m above Ordnance Datum in the south-west sloping down to *c.*27m in the north-east.

## **Archaeological background**

The archaeological potential of the site stems from its location within the archaeologically rich Thames Valley with a wealth of prehistoric and later archaeological finds recorded for the area in general (Ford 1987, Gates 1975). Neolithic occupation deposits have been recorded at Cannon Hill to the south-east (Bradley *et al.* 1976) and a rich Mesolithic site at Holyport, on low-lying ground to the south west (Ames 1993).

## **Objectives and methodology**

The aims of the evaluation were to determine the presence/ absence, extent, condition, character, quality and date of any archaeological or palaeoenvironmental deposits within the area of development. The work was to be carried out in a manner which did not compromise the integrity of archaeological features or deposits which might warrant preservation *in situ*, or might better be excavated under conditions pertaining to full excavation.

The specific research aims of this project were:

- to determine if archaeologically relevant levels have survived on this site; and
- to determine if archaeological deposits of any period are present.

It was proposed to excavate two trenches, each 1.6m wide and 10m long. The trenches were excavated using a Kubota-type machine fitted with a toothless ditching bucket, under direct archaeological supervision. Machine excavation was taken down to the top of the natural geology. Resulting topsoil and subsoil heaps were examined for archaeological artefacts and scanned with a metal detector.

## **Results**

The two trenches were dug as intended (Fig. 3). A complete list of trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1. A search of the spoilheaps revealed no artefacts of archaeological interest.

### Trench 1 (Figs 3 and 4; Pl. 1)

Trench 1 was aligned roughly SW–NE, was 10.00m long and between 0.80m and 1.07m deep (the latter a test pit dug at *c.* 4m from the south-west end). The stratigraphy varied along the trench. At the south-west end, it comprised topsoil and demolition rubble mix which was 0.20m deep above made ground which was 0.33m deep. This sealed a grey/brown sandy silt (buried soil 54) which was 0.22m deep. This overlay, at the SW end of the trench, the natural geology; a light reddish brown sand. Between 4m and 7m the stratigraphy altered slightly, the buried soil (54) being deeper to a maximum of 0.33m deep.

At the north-eastern end of the trench; between 7–10m, topsoil with tree roots 0.29m deep sealed 0.10m of made ground. This in turn sealed 0.30m depth of mid grey/brown sandy silt (buried soil 54). Beneath this was observed a dump deposit (53) which contained pottery (two sherds of mass-produced white earthenware and a sherd of red earthenware) and oyster shell in a silt matrix, up to 0.11m deep, deepening to the north-east. This in turn sealed a light grey/brown sandy silt subsoil (51) 0.06m deep which overlay the light reddish brown sand (natural geology).

A modern disturbance (1) was recorded at the far southern end of the trench. It cut through the buried soil (54) and its fill (52) contained two sherds of mass-produced white earthenware of late 19th- to 20th-century date and two fragments of modern brick./tile.

#### Trench 2 (Figs 3 and 4; Pl. 2)

Trench 2 was 10.00m long and between 0.80m and 1.07m deep, aligned roughly north-south. At the southern end of the trench, between 0–4m; the stratigraphy comprised demolition rubble and topsoil mix 0.14m deep which overlay made ground 0.15m deep, containing brick and chalk rubble. This sealed a mid grey/brown sandy silt horizon; a buried soil (55) which was 0.37m deep. This in turn overlay the natural geology, a light yellow sand, and from 2m to 4m a reddish brown sand. Three areas of modern disturbance were seen to cut through the made ground and penetrate the natural geology in this part of the trench; these contained chalk fragments and modern brick fragments (not retained).

Between 4m and 6m demolition rubble and topsoil mix 0.14m deep sealed a pipe cut (filled with brick rubble) and a live pipe, which was left in place.

From 6m to 10m the stratigraphy of the trench was demolition rubble and topsoil mix 0.20m deep sealing made ground which was 0.26m deep. This overlay 0.35m depth of the mid grey/brown sandy silt buried soil (55) which in turn sealed the geology; a reddish brown sand which in turn sealed at 1.00m below the present ground surface a reddish yellow sand (natural geology). The trench could not be extended to the north due to the presence of a live service.

## **Finds**

### *Pottery*

Modern disturbance 1 (52) contained two sherds of mass-produced white earthenware of 19th- to 20th-century date. Deposit (53) contained two sherds of mass-produced white earthenware and a sherd of red earthenware.

The assemblage is also of 19th- to 20th-century date. Deposit 54 contained a rim sherd of a red earthenware vessel which can only be dated after AD 1550.

### *Struck Flint by Steve Ford*

A single struck flint was recovered from the natural surface of Trench 1. It is not closely datable other than to the Neolithic or Bronze Age.

### *Ceramic Building Material*

Two pieces of ceramic building material (one brick and one tile fragment) were retained from disturbance 1 (52) weighing a total of 94g.

## **Conclusion**

The evaluation recorded modern deposits together with a prehistoric flint tool which was likely to be present through casual discard or loss rather than evidence of nearby occupation. A buried soil was recorded; finds and stratigraphy suggest this horizon is of early modern date. This deposit may have protected earlier deposits if they had existed on the site although the modern features indicate a degree of disturbance; those in Trench 2 likely relate to the buildings that recently stood on the plot. The site does not appear to have any archaeological potential.

## **References**

- Ames, R E, 1993, 'A Mesolithic assemblage from Moor Farm, Holyport, near Maidenhead', *Berkshire Archaeol J* **74** (for 1991-3), 1-8
- BGS, 1978, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50,000, Sheet 269, Solid and Drift Edition, Keyworth
- Bradley, R J, Over, L, Startin, D W A and Weng, R, 1976, 'The Excavation of a Neolithic Site at Cannon Hill, Maidenhead, Berkshire, 1974-75', *Berkshire Archaeol J* **68**, 5-19
- Ford, S, 1987, *East Berkshire Archaeological Survey*, Berkshire County Council Dept Highways and Planning Occas Pap **1**, Reading
- Gates, T, 1975, *The Thames Valley; an archaeological survey of the River Gravels*, Berkshire Archaeol Comm Publ **1**, Reading
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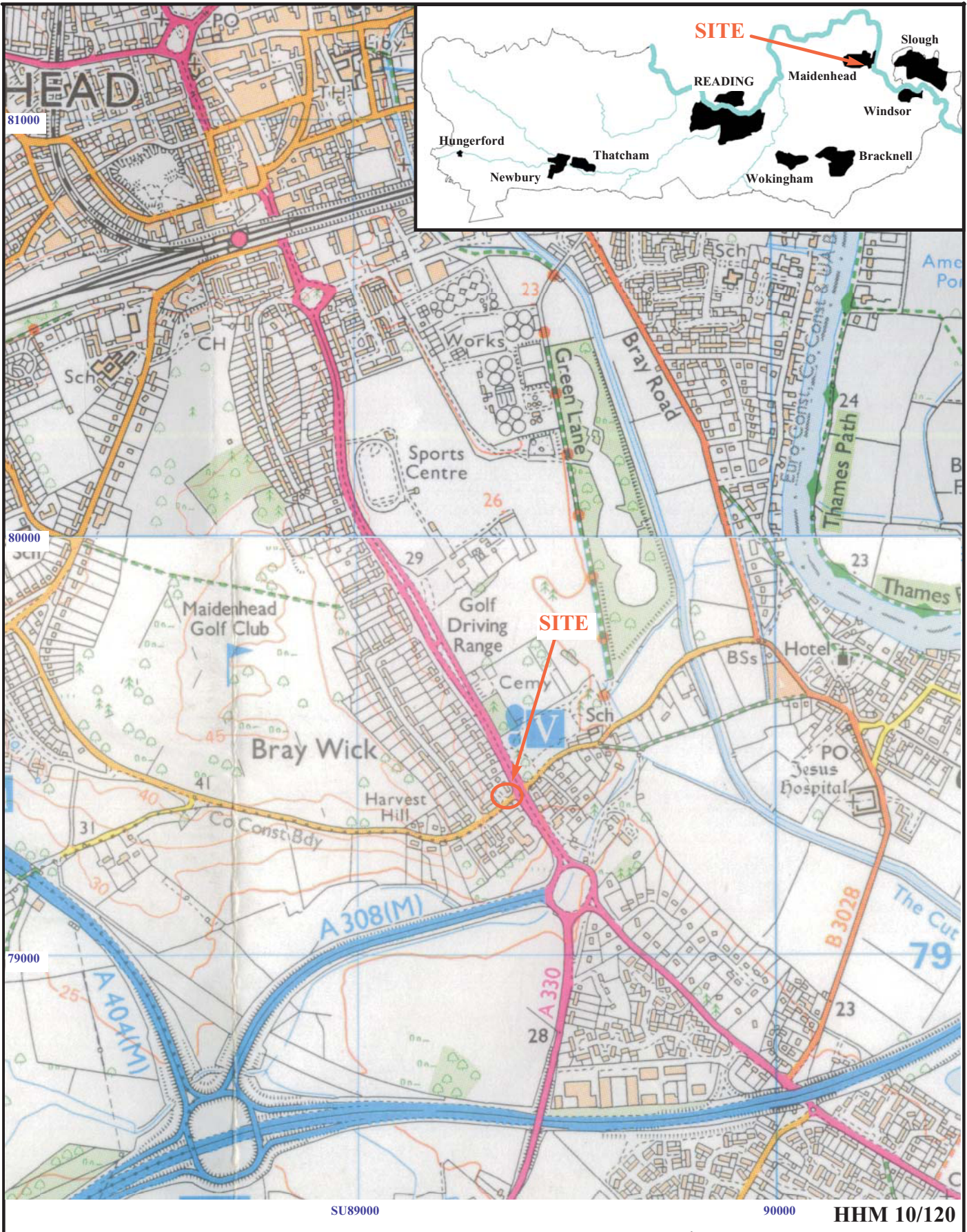
**APPENDIX 1: Trench details APPENDIX 1: Trench details**  
 0m at south or west end

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Length (m)</i>	<i>Breadth (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1	10.0	1.6	SW=0.80 4m:TP=1.07 NE=0.90m	SW:0m-.4m.; 0m–0.20m demolition rubble and or topsoil; 0.20m–0.53m made ground; 0.53-0.75m mid grey brown sandy silt (buried soil 54) 0.75m+ Light reddish brown sand (natural geology) 4m-7m: 0m–0.20m demolition rubble and/or topsoil; 0.20m–0.53m made ground; 0.53-c.0.80m mid grey brown sandy silt (buried soil 54); c.0.80-0.90m light grey brown sandy silt (52); 0.90m+ Light reddish brown sand (natural geology) 7m-10m: 0m–0.29m topsoil with tree roots; 0.29m–0.39m made ground; 0.39-0.69m mid grey brown sandy silt (buried soil 54); 0.69m-0.80m Made ground dump (53) deepening to NE; 0.80-0.86m light grey brown sandy silt (52) 0.86m+ Light reddish brown sand (natural geology) <b>[Plate 1]</b>
2	10.0	1.6	S=0.80 N=1.07	S:0-4m:-0m–0.14m demolition rubble and topsoil mix; 0.14m–0.29m made ground; 0.29m-0.66m mid grey brown sandy silt buried soil (55) 0.66m+ Light yellow sand and from 2m to 4m reddish brown sand (natural geology) 4m-6m:-0m–0.14m demolition rubble and topsoil mix; 0.14m–0.49m made ground and pipe (live) N:6m-10m:-0m–0.20m demolition rubble and topsoil mix; 0.24m–0.50m made ground; 0.50m-0.85m mid grey brown sandy silt buried soil (55) 0.85m-1.00m reddish brown sand (natural geology); 1.00m-1.07m reddish yellow sand (natural geology) <b>[Plate 2]</b>



## APPENDIX 2: Feature details

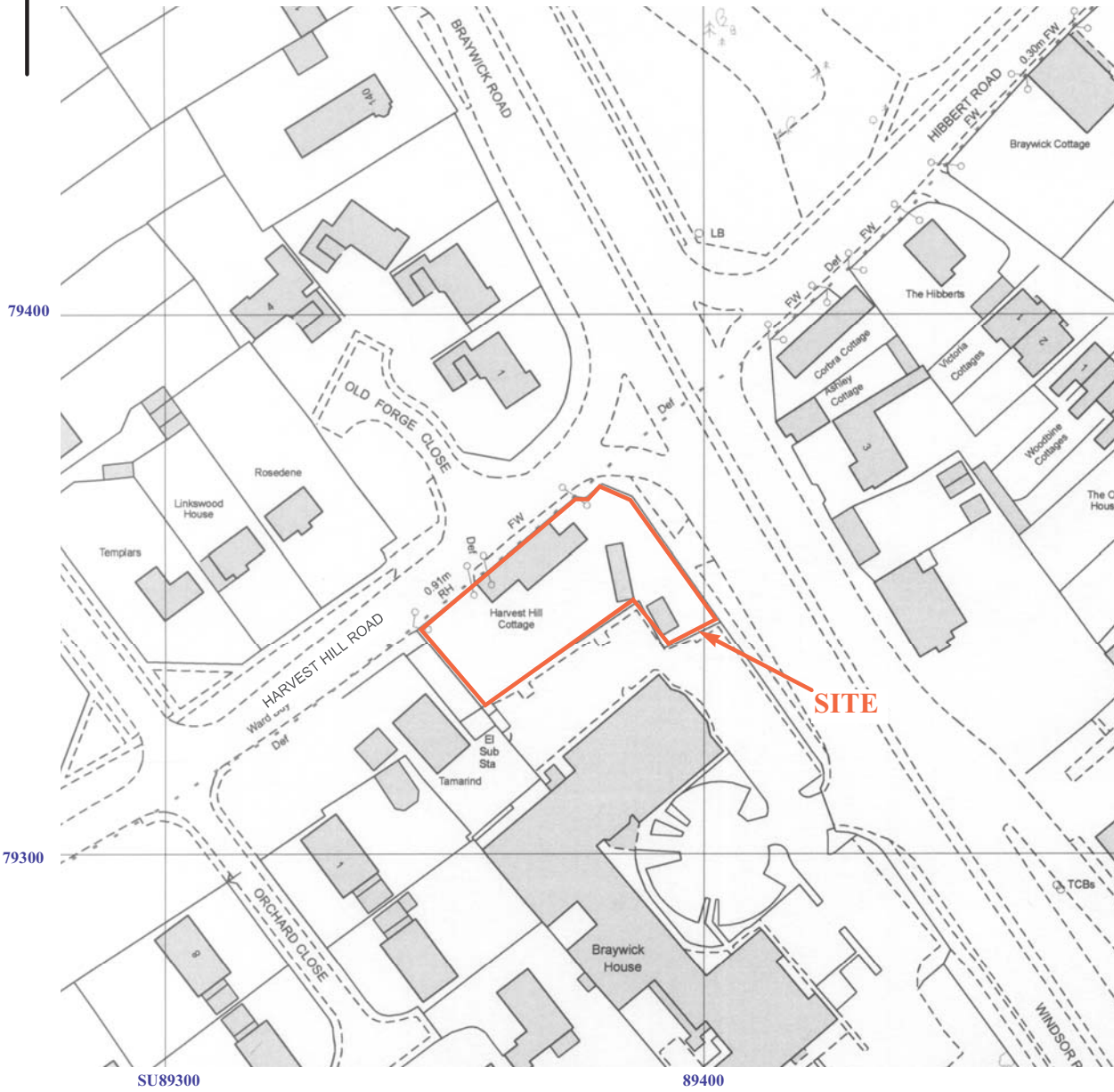
Trench	Cut	Fill (s)	Type	Date	Dating Evidence
1/2		50	Topsoil		
1/2		51	Subsoil		
1	1	52	Disturbance	19 <sup>th</sup> /20 <sup>th</sup> century	Pottery
1		53	Dump/ made ground	19 <sup>th</sup> /20 <sup>th</sup> century	Pottery
1		54	Buried Soil	19 <sup>th</sup> /20 <sup>th</sup> century	Stratigraphy
2		55	Buried Soil	19 <sup>th</sup> /20 <sup>th</sup> century	Association



**Harvest Hill Cottages, Harvest Hill Road,  
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Figure 1. Location of site within Maidenhead and Berkshire.

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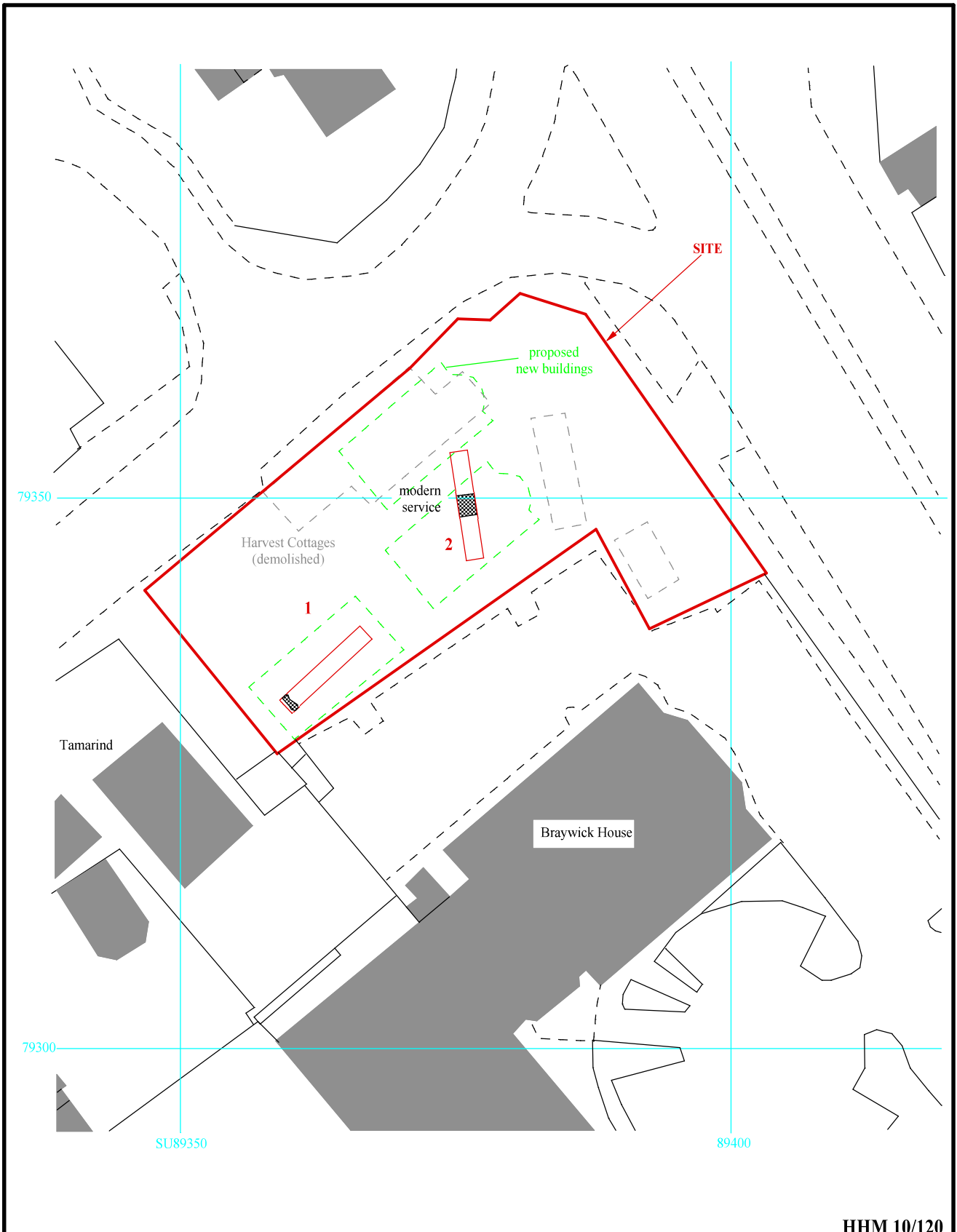
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Figure 2. Detailed location of site on Harvest Hill Road.

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Figure 3. Location of trenches.



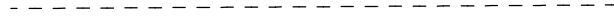
**Trench 1**

NE

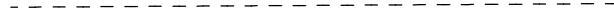
SW

27.84maOD

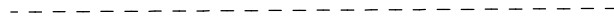
Topsoil (50)



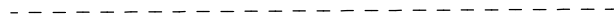
Made ground



Buried soil (54)



53

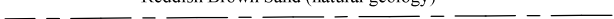


Subsoil (51)



Reddish Brown Sand (natural geology)

base of trench



**Trench 2**

N

S

27.07m

Topsoil (50)



Made ground



Buried soil (55)

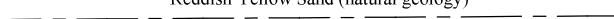


Reddish Brown Sand (natural geology)



Reddish Yellow Sand (natural geology)

base of trench



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Figure 4. Representative sections.



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Plate 1. Trench 1, looking north east; horizontal scales: 2m, 1m; vertical 0.5m.



Plate 2. Trench 2, looking north, horizontal scales: 2m, 1m; vertical 0.5m.

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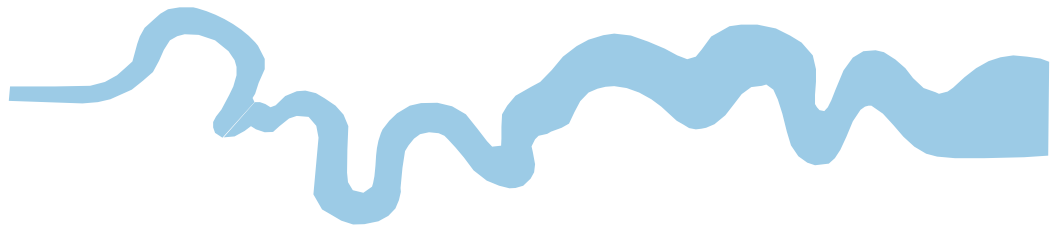
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Berkshire, 2010**  
**Archaeological Evaluation**  
Plates 1 and 2.

THAMES VALLEY  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
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## TIME CHART

	Calendar Years
Modern _____	AD 1901
Victorian _____	AD 1837
Post Medieval _____	AD 1500
Medieval _____	AD 1066
Saxon _____	AD 410
Roman _____	AD 43
Iron Age _____	BC/AD 750 BC
Bronze Age: Late _____	1300 BC
Bronze Age: Middle _____	1700 BC
Bronze Age: Early _____	2100 BC
Neolithic: Late .....	3300 BC
Neolithic: Early .....	4300 BC
Mesolithic: Late .....	6000 BC
Mesolithic: Early .....	10000 BC
Palaeolithic: Upper .....	30000 BC
Palaeolithic: Middle .....	70000 BC
Palaeolithic: Lower .....	2,000,000 BC





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